# Be of hope

**By Chaplain Michael Chaney**

One of the buzz words for our time is "empowerment." "Empower" has replaced "educate" as the thing people, institutions and nations need. We need to "empower" students to learn..., "empower" the church to act in the world..., "empower" people to exercise their citizen rights… or "empower" folks to trust and learn from their mistakes.

Powerlessness is one of the worst conditions to befall a person or a people. When Moses was speaking his last words to Israel before their entrance into the promised land, he warned them of the consequences of straying from God:

*"Your sons and daughters shall be given to another people, while you look on; you will strain your eyes looking for them all day but be powerless to do anything."* - Deut. 28:32

The prophet Isaiah points to the only true source of power for the powerless:

*"Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless."* - Isa. 40:28-29

These words from Isaiah lead us to an absolutely empowering statement by Jesus when he speaks to the ultimate power that he has known:

*"... the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."* - John 10:17-18

Now, anybody can lay down their life. History is filled with inspiring examples of people who have given up their life for a cause. But no one has been able to "take it up again" - until Jesus! Jesus didn't lay down his life to impress the powers that be. He didn't lay down his life as an example of what it means to be a martyr in a great cause.

It was "for the sheep" - that is, it was for the followers of Christ. In John chapter 10, Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me." He laid down his life for you and for me. And just as he laid his life down for the sheep, so he took his life up again for you and me.

Jesus came as the "Good Shepherd" who gives his life for the sheep, or those people who hear his voice and follow him. He notes that there are sheep beyond the limited circle of Israel that belong to his fold. These will also listen to his voice and become a part of the flock of God.

Jesus gives up his own "breath of life" in order to take that life up again in victory over that which was the greatest power of all at that time. To his followers, the risen Christ now gives that life which can never be destroyed by the power of death. When Jesus came to his gathered disciples after his resurrection, the gospel of John uses the imagery of the divine breath to speak to the infusion of life that only God can give:

*"Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."* - John 20:21-22

As it turns out, the greatest power of all is the power of faith in trust in Christ that reverses the destructive power of death. Amazingly, the greatest power of all is this gift of eternal life.

So live your life with confidence. Be empowered by the one who has conquered what has befuddled us as humans since the beginning of time. No matter how difficult life may be for you today, have faith. Accept the challenge to trust in something bigger than yourself.

# Head's Up Yokosuka!

## Community Announcements

**Kamakura Historical Site Community Relations Clean up –** A community relations (COMREL) event to help clean up a historical site in Kamakura will be held May 16 from 9:30 a.m. to noon. Contact Fumiyo Sato at 243-2566 for more detailed information.

**Yokosuka Commissary Case Lot Sale –** The Yokosuka commissary will have a case lot sale May 16 and 17 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the commissary red brick area. In addition to the tremendous saving you can get by purchasing case lot items, there will be food and product demonstrations, giveaways, a bounce house for the kids and great DJ music. Contact the Yokosuka commissary at 243-8935 for more information.

***USS Mustin* (DDG 89) Pre-deployment Fair –** *USS Mustin* will conduct a pre-deployment fair May 21 from 4:30 to 7 p.m. in the Ship Repair Facility (SRF) Oasis Cafeteria. E-mail to mustinfamilies@hotmail.com for more information.

**Compass Program Class –** The next available class will be held May 27 through 29 at the Chapel of Hope in classrooms 2 and 4 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day. Free lunch provided and childcare reimbursed. Compass is a peer-to-peer mentorship program designed to help Navy spouses adapt to military life. Contact Shelle at 264-7270, Marina at 246-7766 or visit the Web site at www.gocompass.org for more information or to register for the class.

**American Red Cross Community Courses and Training –** If you'd like to become a volunteer, register to attend one of our volunteer orientations held the first and third Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. Call 243-7490 for more information or come and register in our office located on the 2nd floor of the Community Center.